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**The Winnipeg Philharmonic Choir
of the Men's Musical Club**

PRESENTS

**VERDI'S
REQUIEM**

WITH FULL ORCHESTRA

**UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
LUCIEN NEEDHAM**

SOLOISTS

ELIZABETH BENSON GUY
Soprano

JOAN MAXWELL
Mezzo-Soprano

GEORGE KENT
Tenor

VICTOR GODFREY
Bass-Baritone

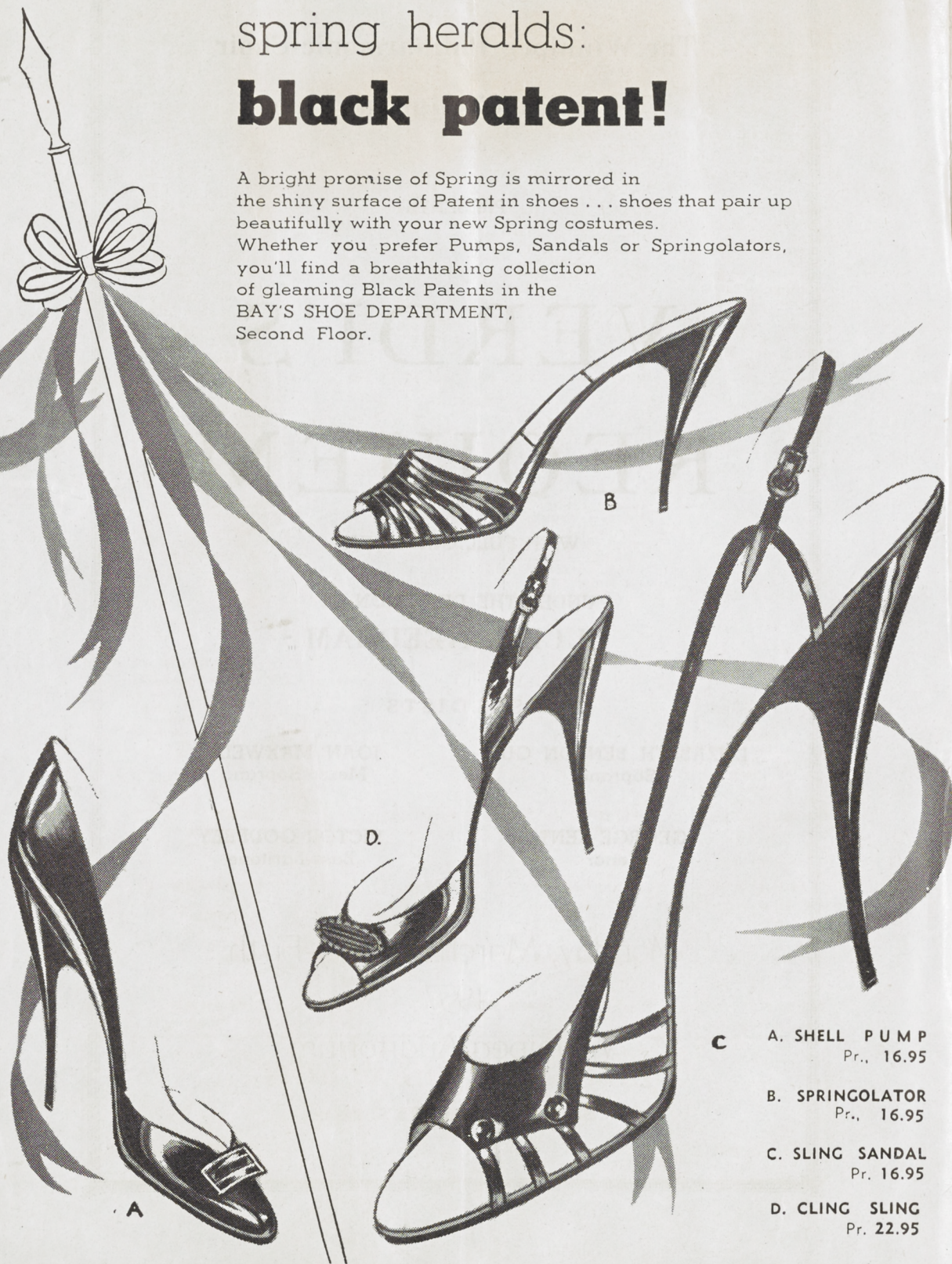
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1957
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PHILHARMONIC PRODUCTIONS — SEASON 1957-58

Members of the audience will be interested to learn that Philharmonic Choir Productions for the 1957-8 season will comprise the following:

Autumn 1957 — "MESSIAH" (Handel)

Spring 1958 — "THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS" (Elgar)

This latter work was that which made an international reputation for its composer soon after its first performance at the Birmingham Triennial Festival in 1900. It consists of the setting of a poem by Cardinal Newman, which of all attempts to penetrate the veil of death, is undoubtedly the most powerful and absorbing.

It should be said that the music which Elgar has wedded to the text is not in the orthodox oratorio style; in short, we shall find that the emphasis is more on "expression" rather than "form."

The successive pages range through a vast field of emotions, from hideous declamations by demons, to hymns of celestial radiance.

There is beauty in profusion — and this particularly in the writing for the soloists, Gerontius (tenor), The Angel of God (mezzo-soprano) and the Angel of the Agony (bass), who also plays the part of the Priest.

The music is strange and complex and should prove a new and exciting experience for Winnipeg music lovers.



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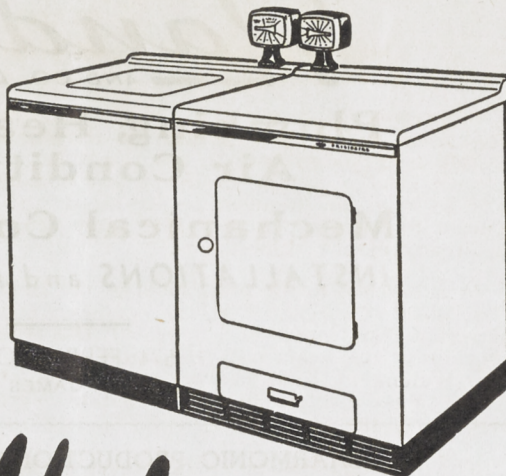
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Program Notes by S. ROY MALEY

REQUIEM (COMPOSED IN MEMORY OF ALESSANDRO MANZONI) Verdi
(1813-1901)

For Four Solo Voices, Chorus and Orchestra

ELIZABETH BENSON GUY, soprano; JOAN MAXWELL, mezzo-soprano

GEORGE KENT, tenor; VICTOR GODFREY, bass-baritone

- I. Requiem et Kyrie (Quartet and Chorus)
- II. Dies irae (Chorus)
 - Tuba mirum (Chorus)
 - Liber scriptus (Contralto and Chorus)
 - Quid sum miser (Soprano, Contralto and Tenor)
 - Rex tremendae (Quartet and Chorus)
 - Recordare (Soprano and Contralto)
 - Ingemisco (Tenor)
 - Confutatis (Bass)
 - Lacrymosa (Quartet and Chorus)

INTERMISSION

- III. Offertorium: Domine Jesu Christe (Quartet)
- IV. Sanctus (Fugue for Double Chorus)
- V. Agnus Dei (Soprano, Contralto and Chorus)
- VI. Lux aeterna (Contralto, Tenor and Bass)
- VII. Libera me (Soprano, Chorus and final Fugue)

Verdi's first attempt at writing liturgical music was made in 1868. After Rossini's death on Nov. 13 of that year, Verdi approached twelve now obscure Italian composers and invited each of them to contribute a number to a requiem to solemnize the occasion. The project was carried out, Verdi's contribution being the "Libera me." The completed Mass, inevitably a hybrid, was never performed. However, Verdi's tribute was not lost. He retained it for his Manzoni Requiem.

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Alessandro Manzoni, the illustrious author of "I Promessi Sposi," was for many years one of Verdi's intimate friends, and when he died on May 22, 1873, the Italian composer was in his retreat at Sant' Agata. From the depths of his profound grief arose the desire to pay homage to his departed friend. It was his desire to have the Requiem performed on the first anniversary of Manzoni's death. He went to Paris and during 1873 composed the entire Mass with the exception of the already extant "Libera me."

In adherence to the original plan, the Requiem was first given on May 22, 1874, in St. Mark's Church, Milan, the composer conducting. The work made a powerful impression, but vociferous approval was received at the three subsequent presentations at the Scala with the same soloists: Mme. Stoltz, Austrian mezzo-soprano; Mme. Waldmann, and the Messrs Capponi and Maini, tenor and bass. The first of these three performances was led by Verdi, the others by Faccio, the regular conductor of the Scala.

The Requiem has been the object of much adverse criticism as well as blind adulation since its premiere. The accusation of theatricalism has been the most frequent of those to be hurled against it. Taking Cherubini's austere mass for the dead as a lofty precedent and fortified by Beethoven's unqualified admiration for that admirable model of liturgical composition, both commenders and detractors of Verdi have deprecated the melodramatic tendencies evinced in various parts of the work. The more remote Palestrina, too, has been called in to confound those who can see no wrong in dramatizing the Day of Judgment; since Palestrina omitted the "Dies Irae" from his Requiems, supposedly because he considered its subject too overpowering for liturgical treatment, his example can scarcely be considered seriously.

That Verdi himself was cognizant of the almost insuperable problems of the "Dies Irae" is indubitable. In a letter to Hans von Bulow, who had in a notorious article bitterly attacked the Requiem, he wrote: "Happy you, who are still the sons of Bach! And we? We, the sons of Palestrina once had a great and authochthonous school. Now it has degenerated and threatens to decline altogether. If only we could begin at the beginning again!"

It may be assumed that Verdi, despairing of being able to suggest subjectively the awe-inspiring nature of the "Dies Irae," reverted consciously to the operatic style, hoping thereby to impress his audiences with an objective realization of the terrors depicted in the text. If we accept this supposition it must be confessed that his aims have been successfully achieved.

The "Tuba Mirum" has been unfavorably compared with Mozart's setting in his Requiem. It has been held against Verdi that in depicting the resurrection in



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the Valley of Jesophat he has pursued a course inconsistent with the text in making the trumpets of the Angels answer one another in a crescendo of tones instead of bursting forth with one mighty call on the words "coet omnes ante thronum." In preference to this literal interpretation, Verdi has adapted the Apocalyptic version in which the graves in the vast region of the dead open up one by one in response to the more and more urgent and commanding tones of the seven trumpets.

The experience of composing *Aida* had unquestionably enlarged Verdi's range and subtlety of expression, and the Requiem Mass stands beside the grand opera as one of the twin peaks of his maturity.

It is true that the melodic idiom of the Mass is the melodic idiom of the composer of *Aida*, Don Carlo and Simon Boccanegra, but what a difference there is in the use to which that idiom is put! Superficially it is easy to relate the sobs of the *Lacrymosa* to the profaner griefs of *Violetta* or *Leonora*. A little thought will discover how much more austere, how much closer to the spirit of some *Pieta* by one of the classical painters, this movement really is.

It is conceived not in terms of a love-duet nor of one of those concerted pieces in which singer gives expression to his or her reactions to the dramatic situation; it is conceived in terms of four solo voices, supported by the chorus, concentrating on the same idea, just as, in their very different idiom, do the choral movements of Palestrina.

The "*Lacrymosa*" is the last verse of the long poem, "*Dies irae*," which is in size and scope the most important section of the Mass. It is against Verdi's setting of it that the charge of theatricality has especially been made. Let us take the sting out of the word and call it rather, 'dramatic,' Verdi's treatment of the medieval conception of the Last Judgment certainly is dramatic, and achieves a majestic grandeur and 'terribilita' comparable with the same subject behind the altar of the Sistine Chapel.

The other movements of the Mass, the opening Requiem and Kyrie, the Offertorium, Sanctus, Agnus Dei and Lux aeterna, offer less opportunity for dramatic treatment and Verdi does not dramatize them.

He uses solo voices, in the Kyrie, for instance, with all the grand sweep of phrase and expansion of tone that he had learnt in the opera-house, yet the effect is liturgical and hierarchic, because the voices are no longer in conflict with one another. Nor do they embody theatrical characters; they are the impersonal vehicles of the musical idea.

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If any one doubts Verdi's ability to express sincere religious feeling — and despite his agnosticism, or rather his anti-clericalism due to political rather than dogmatic causes, he was at heart and in conduct a Christian — the setting of "Hostias et preces" must surely convince him. It is difficult to imagine a purer expression of offering and oblation. And in the Sanctus, set as a double fugue for chorus, Verdi has caught an echo of the music that is sung by the young-eyed Cherubim, those 'least and most child-like of the Sons of God' as Newman called them, so fresh and innocent is it, especially in the angelic Pleni sunt coeli where the theme is sung in augmentation pianissimo and dolcissimo.

After the jubilant Hosannas we return to earth and the body on the bier in the Agnus Dei, in which again the compromise between Verdi's individual melodic style and liturgical tradition produces a conception of the three-fold invocation of the Lamb of God which is extraordinarily original in its simplicity.

The "Lux aeterna" is the same plane of solemn beauty with its wonderfully imaginative orchestration. Here Verdi has given us some of his most inspired moments. The mystic effulgence of the accompaniment of string tremolos, the magical use of modulation on the opening page and the ethereal close with the alternating, shimmering triads, B flat major, D major and D minor, are of compelling loveliness.

Impressive, too, is the "Requiem aeternam" with its somber accompanying horns, trombones, tuba, kettle-drums and double-bass pizzicati.

In the concluding "Libera me" we awaken to a world of the Amelias and Leonoras. The soprano soloist, who has been given little independent music up to this point, leads here, muttering her lonely fearful prayer for deliverance and, after the magical reprise of the "Requiem aeternam" crowning the end of the work with broad phrases that soar above the tumult of the fugue.

That Verdi wrote much of the music of this score with an eye to its effectiveness for the soloists, can scarcely be denied. But that is not necessarily a reason for condemnation. When one considers how unvocal are the solo and choral parts of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony or of Mahler's Eighth, and how nearly bordering on the impossible it is to achieve even tolerable presentations of these works, one should not be too hasty in damning Verdi because he understood the human voice and its capabilities.

Thirty-four years of his life had been spent in writing for the operatic stage before he attempted church music; it was hardly to be expected that a composer with an essentially dramatic genius would be suddenly metamorphosed into an ascetic, religious one who would eschew with horror all striving for mere worldly effects.

As the reader will see, the work is divided into seven parts. The second, the Dies Irae, is further subdivided into nine sections, but these follow each other without pause. We have designated these divisions, indicating the nature of the vocal treatment in each case.

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Verdi's Requiem

I. REQUIEM AND KYRIE

Chorus

Requiem aeternam dona eis,
Domine: et lux perpetua
luceat eis.

Te decet hymnus Deus in
Sion, et tibi reddetur votum
in Jerusalem:

Exaudi orationem meam, ad te omnis
caro veniet.

Grant them rest eternal, Lord, and let
perpetual light shine down upon them.

There shall be singing unto Thee in
Zion, and prayer shall go up to Thee
in Jerusalem

Give ear to my supplication, O Lord;
unto Thee all flesh shall come at last.

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Bass and Chorus

Kyrie eleison:
Christe eleison:
Kyrie eleison.

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

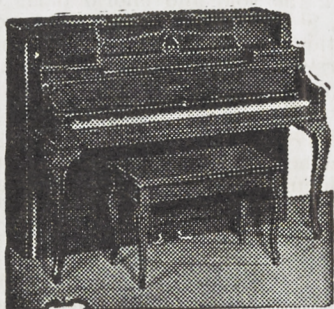
II. DIES IRAE

DIES IRAE, DIES ILLA

Chorus

Dies irae, dies illa,
Solvat saeculum in favilla,
Teste David cum Sybilla.
Quantus tremor est futurus,
Quando iudex est venturus,
Cuncta stricte discussurus!

Day of anger, day of terror,
All shall crumble into ashes,
This was David's revelation.
What a trembling shall possess them,
When the judge shall come to judgment,
Searching all the souls before him.



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TUBA MIRUM

Bass and Chorus

Tuba mirum spargens sonum
Per sepulchra regionum,
Coget omnes ante thronum.
Mors stupebit et natura,
Cum resurget creatura,
Judicanti responsura.

Wondrous sound the trumpet flingeth,
Through earth's sepulchres it ringeth,
All before the throne it bringeth,
Death is struck and nature quaking,
All creation is awaking
To its Judge an answer making.

LIBER SCRIPTUS

Mezzo-Soprano and Chorus

Liber scriptus proferetur,
In quo totum continetur,
Unde mundus judicetur.
Judex ergo cum sedebit,
Quidquid latet apparebit:
Nil inultum remanebit.

Lo! the book, exactly worded,
Wherein all hath been recorded:
Thence shall judgment be awarded.
When the Judge His seat attaineth,
And each hidden deed arraigneth,
Nothing unavenged remaineth.

DIES IRAE, DIES ILLA

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor and Chorus

Dies irae, dies illa
Solvat saeculum in favilla,
Teste David cum Sybilla.

Nearer still, and still more near
Draws the day of prophecy,
Doomed to melt the earth and sky.

QUID SUM MISER

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano and Tenor

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?
Quem Patronum rogaturus?
Cum vix justus sit securus.

What shall I, frail man, be pleading?
Who for me be interceding
When the just are mercy needing?

REX TREMENDAE

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Bass and Chorus

Rex tremendae majestatis,
Qui salvandos salvas gratis,
Salva me, fons pietatis.

King of majesty tremendous,
Who dost Thy salvation send us,
Fount of pity, then befriend us!

RECORDARE JESU PIE

Soprano and Mezzo-Soprano

Recordare Jesu pie,
Quod sum causa tuae viae,
Ne me perdas illa die.
Quaerens me sedisti lassus,
Redemisti crucem passus:
Tantus labor non sit cassus.
Juste Judex ultionis,
Donum fac remissionis
Ante diem rationis.

Recollect, O Love divine,
'Twas for this lost sheep of Thine
Thou Thy glory didst resign:
Satest wearied seeking me;
Sufferedest upon the tree:
Let not vain Thy labor be.
Judge of justice, hear my prayer;
Spare me, Lord, in mercy spare,
Ere the reckoning day appear.

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Tenor Solo

Ingemisco tanquam reus,
Culpa rubet vultus meus,
Supplicanti parce Deus.
Qui Mariam absolvisti,
Et latronem exaudisti,
Mihi quoque spem dedisti.
Preces meae non sunt dignae:
Sed tu bonus fac benigne,
Ne perenni cremer igne.
Inter oves locum praesta,
Et ab haedis me sequestra,
Statuens in parte dextra.

Lo, Thy gracious face I seek;
Shame and grief are on my cheek;
Sighs and tears my sorrow speak.
Thou didst Mary's guilt forgive;
Didst the dying thief receive:
Hence doth hope within me live.
Worthless are my prayers, I know;
Yet, oh, cause me not to go
Into everlasting woe.
Severed from the guilty band,
Make me with Thy sheep to stand,
Placing me on Thy right hand.

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CONFUTATIS

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Confutatis, maledictis,
Flammis acribus addictis,
Voca me cum benedictis.
Oro supplex et acclinis,
Cor contritum quasi cinis:
Gere curam mei finis.
(Dies irae, dies illa, etc.)

While the wicked are confounded,
By devouring flame surrounded,
Call me forth to bliss unbounded!
Lo! I pray, a suppliant bending,
While remorse my heart is rending:
Heed me when my days are ending!
(Day of anger, day of mourning, etc.)

LACRYMOSA DIES ILLA

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Bass and Chorus

Lacrymosa dies illa,
Qua resurget ex favilla
Judicandus homo reus:
Huic ergo parce Deus.
Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem.

Amen.

Ah! What weeping on that morrow
When man's ashes form shall borrow;
Judgment guilty shall declare him!
In Thy mercy, Lord, then spare him.
Gentle Jesus, gracious Lord, grant them
rest.

Amen.

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III. OFFERTORIUM: DOMINE JESU CHRISTE

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor and Bass

Domine Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae,
libera animas omnium fidelium defunctorum de poenis inferni, et de profundo lacu:

Libera eas de ore leonis, ne absorbeat eas tartarus, ne cadant in obscurum; sed signifer sanctus Michael repraesentet eas in lucem sanctum: Quam olim Abrahae promisisti, et semini ejus.

Hostias et preces tibi Domine laudis offerimus: tu suscipe pro animabus illis, quarum hodie memoriam facimus: fac eas, Domine, de morte transire ad vitam.

Lord Jesus Christ, King of Glory, deliver Thou the souls of all those that died in the faith from pains everlasting and from the unfathomed abyss.

Deliver them from the mouth of the lion, lest the jaws of the pit shall swallow them, and endless darkness enshroud them. Let Saint Michael, leader of hosts, bring them forward into Thy holy splendor, as Thou didst promise unto Abraham and his seed for ever.

We offer sacrifice and prayer unto Thee, O Lord. Accept these now for the souls of them for whose sake we do in memory hold this day. Make them to pass, from death unto life everlasting.

IV. SANCTUS

Fugue, for Double Chorus

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua. Benedictus qui venit in Nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth! Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

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V. AGNUS DEI

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano and Chorus

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:
dona eis requiem.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the
sins of the world: give them rest.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:
dona eis requiem.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the
sins of the world: give them rest.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:
dona eis requiem sempiternam.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the
sins of the world: give them rest.

VI. LUX AETERNA

Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor and Bass

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine: cum
Sanctis tuis in aeternum quia pius es.
Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine,
et lux aeterna luceat eis: Cum sanctis.

Light eternal, shine down upon them,
O Lord God, for evermore; and with
Thy saints let them be numbered for
ever. Grant them rest eternal, and
let light perpetual shine down upon
them.

VII. LIBERA ME

Soprano Solo, Chorus, and Final Fugue

Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna
in die illa tremenda: quando caeli
movendi sunt et terra. Dum veneris
judicare saeculum per ignem.

Deliver my soul, O Lord, from eternal
death, on the dread day of judgment;
when the heaven and the earth shall
be moved, and when Thou shalt come
in the midst of fire to judge the
whole world.

Tremens factus sum ego, et timeo, dum
discussio venerit atque ventura ira.

I am full of terror for the judgment
that shall come on the day of Thy
wrath.

Dies irae, dies illa calamitatis et
miseriae, dies magna et amara valde.

Day of anger, day of mourning! Utter
confusion and despondency shall be-
fall them, and most bitter sorrow.

Libera me, Domine, etc.

Rest eternal, etc.

Requiem aeternam, etc.

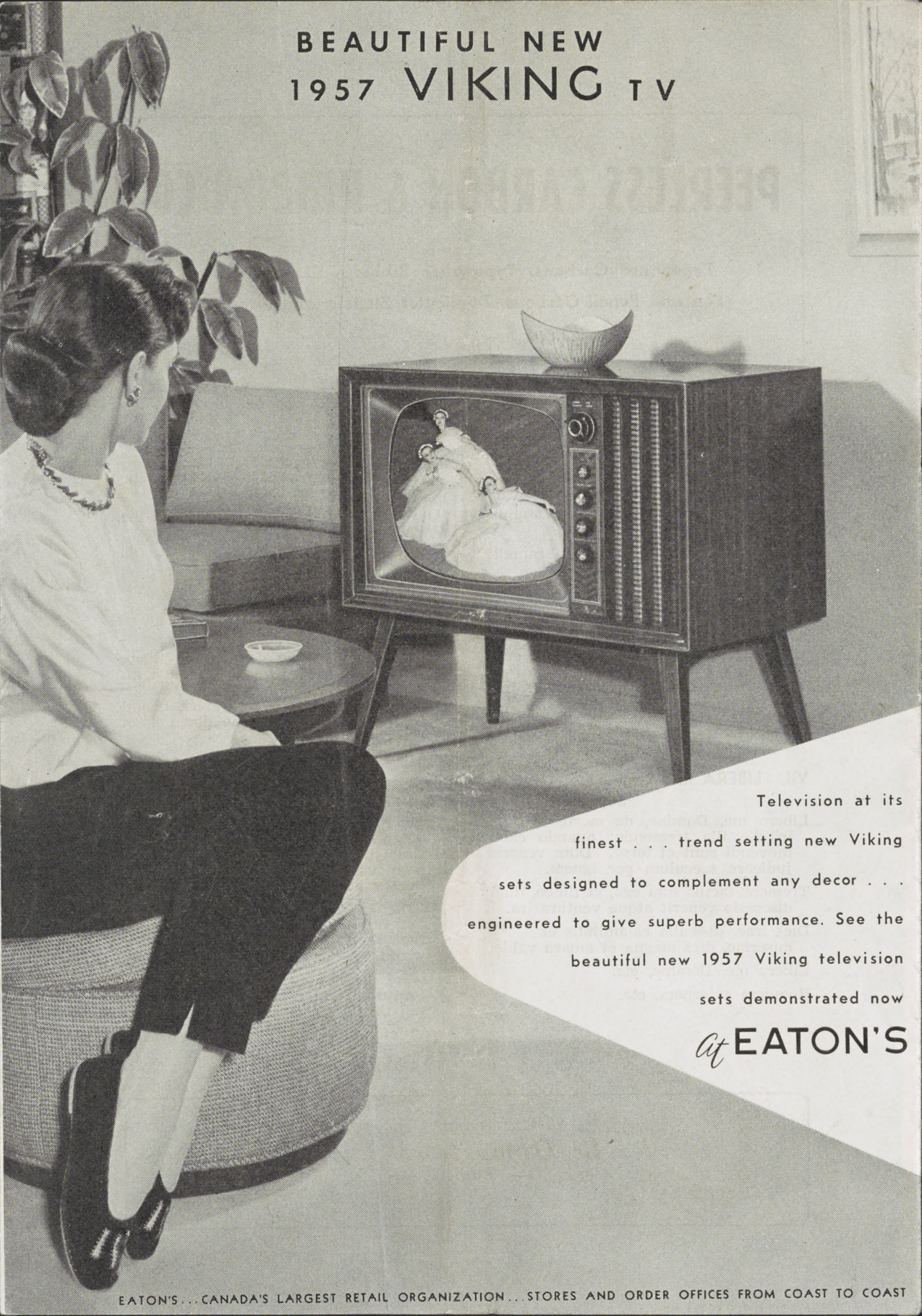
Deliver me, O Lord, etc.

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